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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 006409

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BAGHDAD PLEASE ALSO PASS TO PRT MOSUL

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: IRAQIS BRIEF ON NEW POLITICAL ALLIANCE IN MOSUL,  
DECRY KURDISH TERRITORIAL CLAIMS IN NINEWAH PROVINCE

REF: BAGHDAD 4140

Classified By: POL/C Janice G. Weiner for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: A Sunni Arab politician and an independent Kurdish tribal leader from Mosul briefed us Nov. 7 on their new provincial political alliance and their effort to block what they view as Kurdish expansionism south of the green line. The political bloc will seek to knit together moderate Sunnis, independent Kurds, tribes, minorities, and others. Both men characterized the U.S. as taking the side of the mainstream Kurdish parties and asked that we establish a reputation for neutrality and create an atmosphere for negotiation among the parties themselves. The Kurdish tribal leader asserted that the PUK and especially KDP are undemocratic and that Kurds are increasingly chafing against their leadership. End summary.

¶2. (C) At their request, we met with two Iraqis from Mosul visiting Turkey on Nov. 7, Muhiddin Jawhar and Atheal Alazez Mohammed. Jawhar is a Kurdish tribal leader not affiliated with KDP or PUK; Mohammed is the brother of Osama al-Najafi, a member of the Iraqi Council of Representatives and former Iraqi Minister of Industry. (Al-Najafi was also in the group visiting Turkey, though he did not meet with us.) Mohammed told us that he and many other Sunni Arabs are afraid to meet with personnel from PRT Mosul, as doing so would put their lives in danger. Thus they asked to meet U.S. officials here. Mohammed said his delegation had also visited Jordan (where they met King Abdullah and the Jordanian PM) and Saudi Arabia (where they met the Defense and Interior Ministers).

¶3. (C) Mohammed briefed us on the newly-founded "United Mosul Group" (as interpreted from Arabic). He claimed that this new political alliance would compete in the upcoming provincial elections in Ninewah, and that it included prominent Sunni Arab and some Kurdish tribal leaders and other politicians including his brother (al-Najafi), Ghazi al-Yawer, and leaders of the Herki (Kurdish) tribe. He said the group consisted of 10 out of the twenty MPs currently representing Ninewah in the COR, including representatives from the Iraqi List (Allawi), Tawafuq, Iraqi National Dialogue (Mutlaq), and the Takrir list. He expected the

alliance's main opponents would be the Iraqi Islamic Party and the mainstream Kurdish parties (KDP and PUK). The group will seek the support of as many Iraqi communities as possible: Arabs, Turkomans, Yezidis, Christians, Shabak, etc. He characterized relations between Arabs in Mosul and the mainstream Kurdish parties as "very bad."

¶4. (C) As his brother did with Amb. Khalilzad (reftel), Mohammed decried Kurdish "expansionism" in Ninewah and other provinces. He accused the Iraqi Kurds of planning to separate from Iraq, but only after taking control of as much territory as possible. He cited the same example as al-Najafi: despite the fact that few villages near Mosul Dam are Kurdish, the Iraqi Kurds have demanded the land around the dam, thus ensuring their control of the electricity grid in the region. He warned that Kurdish actions raise the specter of intercommunal and even regional violence.

¶5. (C) Mohammed asserted that the Kurds have been able to take control of these lands with the support of the U.S. and by controlling portions of the GOI in Baghdad. Through this "manipulation," the Kurdish parties control 32 out of 41 seats on the provincial council. He said most of the ISF in Mosul city and the province are peshmerga, and "not even Kurds from Mosul." He claimed this was increasing tensions between the communities. Mohammed said that the Kurdish parties are moving people from above the green line not only to Kirkuk, but to the Tel Keyf, Sheykhani, and Zumar districts in Ninewah province. They have done so, he claimed, in order to change the demographics there and change control from Ninewah to Dohuk province. He asserted that teachers in some schools in these areas are barred from teaching in Arabic.

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¶6. (C) He and Jawhar both said that Kurds and Arabs in the Mosul area had lived together in peace for centuries. Mohammed emphasized that the north is excluded from the Iraqi body politic. Mosul is a city of 2.5 million people, he said, yet there are no ministers in the Iraqi cabinet from either Mosul or Kirkuk. Both men agreed that the most important thing they want from the U.S. is to "be neutral" and create an atmosphere wherein the Arabs and Kurds can work out their differences. They repeated their assertion that we are perceived in northern Iraq as firmly aligned with the Iraqi Kurds, and that the Kurds finger their opponents as terrorists and either get CF to arrest them or do it themselves.

¶7. (C) Jawhar asserted that a majority of Kurds do not favor Kurdish separatism, and that Kurds are "suffocating" under the KDP and PUK. With these parties' tacit agreement, Iran's influence in the north is increasing, and many in Iraq still resent the parties' role in the Iran-Iraq War. The Iraqi Kurds are increasingly frustrated by the lack of democracy in territory controlled by the PUK and, especially, the KDP. This frustration may soon reach a boiling point and spill over into further violent confrontations in the north. He recommended the U.S. press Iraqi Kurdish leaders on democratic reform in their region.

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